



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

For Immediate Release:
July 18, 2007

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BARRETT EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER CUTS IN FEDERAL FUNDING FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

MILWAUKEE -- Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett announced today that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has awarded the Milwaukee Urban Area a total of \$4.63 million, as part of the FY 2007 Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Grant Program, a 45% decrease in funding over last year's allotment of \$8.57 million.

"Cuts to homeland security funds are cuts to public safety," said Mayor Barrett. "While terrorism is a central concern for the Department of Homeland Security, it's important to remember this funding also provides for the equipment, training, preparedness exercises and communications capabilities that we use every day to respond to crime as well as to incidents like the Falk explosion and recent plane crash into Lake Michigan. These cuts affect not just the City of Milwaukee, but the entire Southeastern Wisconsin region."

UASI funds are used to enhance the metropolitan Milwaukee region's capabilities to prevent, respond, and recover from a terrorist or "all-hazards" incident, including natural or man-made disasters. The funding is distributed across police, fire, public health, and citizen preparedness organizations in the City of Milwaukee and throughout Milwaukee, Waukesha, Racine, Ozaukee, and Washington Counties.

In previous years, funding has been used to improve interoperable communications capabilities (allowing departments and municipalities to talk to each other via radio systems), enhance chemical/biological/explosive response capabilities, develop better information and intelligence gathering efforts and for the region's mobile surveillance camera project.

Additionally, funds have been used for training and public education training for first responders and volunteers in the five-county region.